

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 and 41-42 were pending in the application. Claims 1-14, 16-19, 21-24, and 41 have been amended. Claims 12, 20, and 32 have been cancelled. Accordingly, Claims 1-11, 13-19, 21-31, and 41-42 are now pending in the application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 42 was allowed.

Claim 41 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicant appreciates Examiner's consideration of this claim.

35 U.S.C. § 103 Rejections

Claims 1-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaetsu et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,643,141) in view of Doblar et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,922,342) and further in view of Kaplan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,680,904) and Branscomb (U.S. Patent No. 6,930,890).

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of claim 42 that the Examiner considered to be allowable over the cited references. Allowed dependent claim 41 has been amended to incorporate the features of claims 1 and 2. Applicant submits that each of the amended claims 1 and 41 recites a combination of features deemed allowable by the Examiner. In accordance, claims 1 and 41 are believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references.

Claims 2-11, 13-19 and 21-31 are dependent upon claim 1 and are therefore believed to patentably distinguish over the cited references for at least the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is requested.

If any fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge said fees to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert, & Goetzel, P.C. Deposit Account No. 501505/5681-70800/MJL.

Respectfully submitted,



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